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The Twenty-Fourth Iowa Volunteers

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house within one mile of the main road for a distance of twenty miles, and that several persons had frozen to death on that road the previous winter.

The next morning, with the mercury hovering about the point of congelation, I walked fifteen miles to St. Charles, and on Christmas morning I proceeded from there to Winona. The wind had given away to a complete calm, and as I came in sight of that city a most beautiful spectacle, only to be seen in such a climate, presented itself to my eyes. The smoke from hundreds of chimneys rose in almost perpendicular columns until it seemed to vanish in the azure sky. Beyond the city lay the crystallized level of the majestic Mississippi, bordered by the snow-covered bluffs of the Wisconsin shore.

I went to the land office and, after paying a premium of five per cent for exchange of my wild-cat money for gold, entered my quarter section of land, and then turned my face toward my Iowa home, which I reached a day or two before the close of the old year, after having walked more than 600 miles in the midst of the severe weather of that extraordinary winter.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH IOWA VOLUNTEERS.

From Muscatine to Winchester.

BY THAD. L. SMITH.

(Continued from April number.)

Battle of Champion Hill.

The column, Hovey's division in advance, reached Bolton Station about 4 P. M. on the 15th. Here our advance guard encountered the enemy's pickets, and a sharp skirmish ensued. Having driven the pickets about a mile, the skirmishers were withdrawn, a position chosen, the line of battle formed, our own pickets put out, arms stacked, and the men ordered to remain close to their guns.

A few, however, paid a hurried visit to Bolton Station, cap-

turing a supply of meal, bacon, sugar, etc., with something a little new in the line of captures—a few gallons of excellent brandy, which even the men of the "Temperance Regiment" could not resist tasting although none partook freely enough to render their joints limber or their steps unsteady. The troops had become accustomed to coming in contact with the enemy's pickets, and thought little about the force in front. A battle was one of the things liable to occur any day, and anticipating it was neither profitable nor pleasant. Yet after darkness set in there was an unusual quietude in camp, as if inspired by a presentiment of the terrible ordeal of the morrow. It was not a fear that occasioned this, but a conjecture of a possible occurrence in the event of a battle, and thence a turning of the mind towards the loved ones of the home circle. Morning came; still all was silent in front. The sun rose clear and warm. The advance moved out about 6 o'clock, going cautiously and slowly in the direction of the foe. About 8 o'clock the line of battle was formed some three miles from the encampment of last night. General Hovey's division took position on the right of the main road leading to Vicksburg via Champion Hill. The lines were formed in the edge of the timber skirting the hill. Skirmishers were immediately thrown out, and the enemy discovered to be posted on the ridge of the hill about three-fourths of a mile from the point at which the road begins its winding ascent. A thick growth of timber beginning at the base and extending over and beyond the narrow ridge rendered it very difficult to discover his exact position. The country was much broken by deep, narrow ravines, which made the advance extremely exhausting and difficult. Hovey's division being foremost, it devolved upon him to bring on the engagement. Skirmishing had been progressing more or less briskly for nearly two hours. At 10 o'clock the skirmishers were withdrawn, and an advance ordered. Then came the lull that precedes the storm. The first brigade led off, bearing towards the right gradually, and covering the main road. Upon reaching the crest of the first line of hills they received and gave a terrible volley. The second brigade, pressing for-

ward as rapidly and in as good order as the nature of the ground would permit, arrived a moment later and were similarly greeted and similarly responded. The first line of the enemy retired a short distance to their main line, their batteries continuing to play mercilessly on their advancing foes who were loading and firing as they went. An open field intervening on the left of the road between the enemy's main line and the second brigade, he was observed to be posted on the rise of ground just beyond, a position from which he would be able to rake with a withering fire of musketry and artillery the entire space. Two regiments of the second brigade, the 28th Iowa and the 56th Ohio, were ordered to move to the left of the open space, and take a position in a ravine near the center of the field. The 24th was ordered to move up on the left of the first brigade, which advanced at double quick on the enemy's lines, the right swinging round and partially flanking the enemy's line, and compelling it to retire. The 24th was then ordered to cross the upper right-hand corner of the field, which it did under a severe discharge of grape and canister from a battery located on an eminence near the opposite corner of the field, and in a position commanding the main road winding around the right, and a by-road which leading up on the left, intersected the main road near the point of its location. The main road making a sharp turn to the left, the regiment passed over it, and leaving the line of the first brigade lying down, halted in a shallow ravine a short distance in advance. The battery on the immediate left and the musketry in front kept the air full of deadly missiles, most of them passing harmlessly over them. But the gunners perceiving that the line was not advancing, quickly became more accurate in their aim, and the regiment was losing men every moment. Capt. Martin, of Company I, discovering the exact position of the battery, pointed it out to Col. Byam, who after consulting a moment with Lieut. Col. Wilds, ordered it to be charged. Glad of the opportunity to escape from their present dangerous position, where they were receiving fire without being able to return it, the men rose, fixed bayonets, and rushed to the

charge. The din around them was deafening. Grape and canister from five pieces was poured into them as rapidly as the guns could be loaded and discharged, but with that fierce and burning enthusiasm which the hope of victory and the shame of defeat can only inspire in the man of true courage, alone and unsupported, they pressed forward rapidly in good order, closing up the gaps in the line as fast as they were made.

Fortunately, the distance to be passed over was not very great, and the way comparatively smooth. But the men at the guns were brave and determined, and it was not till they were shot down at their posts and captured, or driven back at the point of the bayonet, that they yielded up their destructive weapons. The regiment of Georgians in support, however, were less brave, and seeing the battery captured, and that their volley did not for a moment check their advancing foe, precipitately fled. Lieut. Col. Wilds being close up with the right, seized one of the guns and attempted to turn it upon the enemy, at the same time calling upon the men to halt.

About the time the battery fell into our hands, Major Ed Wright, who was at his post on the left, received a severe wound, compelling him to quit the field. Captain Henderson, of Company A, heard the order given to halt and succeeded in checking the right, but the left continuing in pursuit of the fleeing foe, Col. Wilds ran down the line and succeeded with great difficulty in getting those on the left to halt, but not until they had advanced more than one hundred yards beyond the battery, and extended the line to more than double its original length by reason of the halt on the right.

In the meantime the enemy's left was still unbroken, a fresh line of troops had appeared in front, and a strong force dispatched to operate on the right flank. The regiment retired by order, slowly at first, returning the concentrated fire upon it with a spirit and energy which showed how loath they were to yield up their hard-earned prize. Could they have had support on either flank at that critical moment, the fortunes of the day might have been decided then and there. But the enemy perceiving the paucity of the number opposed to them,

and the stubbornness with which they fought, attempted to surround and capture them. In this, however, they were detected, and while the center was withdrawn, the flanking companies, A and G, stubbornly resisted any approach in the rear.

Failing in this, the enemy advanced his whole line on the double quick, driving back at the same time the entire division. Left without any means of support whatever, the only means of avoiding death or capture was instantaneous flight. A spirited race ensued for more than half a mile. It was during this retreat, and the period of its attempt to retain the battery, that the regiment incurred its severest loss. Had they been sensible of the full danger of their situation and the hopelessness of retaining their prize without support when assailed on three sides by more than five times their number, they might have escaped better, but so terrible and close was the contest on front and flank, that each thought his own the only position assailed. Then, too, not more than twenty minutes were occupied in the whole adventure. It reflected great credit upon both officers and men that, though so many fell, there were but thirteen captured. Being driven beyond the open field, about 100 rallied under shelter of the same hill where they had first met the enemy's fire, and having refilled their cartridge boxes, were again advanced to assist in holding the enemy in check until reinforcements could be brought up. Soon after this, a division of McPherson's corps, under command of Brigadier General M. M. Crocker, came to their relief. The gallant charge of the 5th, 10th and 17th Iowa regiments quickly sent the rebels back to their former main line. Logan's division, striking them in the rear, and threatening to cut off their escape to Vicksburg, decided the contest at once. The bliss of that moment repaid them for all their past toil, suffering and danger. The faces begrimed with powder and dust relaxed their stolid and determined expression, and shout answering shout went ringing through the forest aisles.

Then came the lull after victory, and the hurried, anxious inquiries concerning the fate of absent comrades. A few only

were allowed to go to the assistance of the wounded, while the remainder were marched over the same road where they had fought so stubbornly during the day, and upon either side of which were scattered their dead and wounded comrades. Reaching Baker's creek about dark, the division went into camp. Never can the aspect of the regiment on that night be effaced from memory. Nearly one-half the number engaged were either killed or wounded. The survivors clustering around their log fires carefully described to one another the incidents of the day, where a comrade had fallen and the character and location of his wounds. The proud joy of victory had been mellowed down to soberness by the memory of the sacrifice of smoking blood upon the field, the pale still forms of the dead, the agonized features of the wounded, and the thoughts of sorrowing hearts at home. Deeply did the soldiers of Companies C and H lament the fall of their gallant captains. Captain Silas D. Johnson had fallen near the battery just after its capture. In the retreat an attempt was made to assist him off the field by Captain Martin. Making a determined effort he bounded to his feet, and, with the assistance at hand, walked about ten steps, when his muscles relaxed, his eyes grew dim, and he dropped like a withered leaf. He was carried about thirty yards further, when the enemy coming up, killed Captain Huey of his company, thus compelling the others to abandon him. He had been an earnest, efficient and gallant officer. In addition to these qualities of the soldier he possessed a social, humorous disposition which rendered his appearance in the circle about the camp-fire always welcome. He had fallen in the hottest of the fray while leading his men forward before the tide had turned against us. Captain William Carbee had fallen far in front of the battery, at the moment of checking the further advance of his company. Above the ordinary height, erect and well formed, his fine appearance had made him the mark of some rebel sharpshooter. Modest, social, brave and earnest, the community at home lost a valuable citizen and our country a model soldier. Lieutenant Chauncey Lawrence was killed at the outset of the charge. Possessing a weak constitu-

tion, he had struggled long and well to peform his whole duty to his country, and fell while gallantly advancing to meet its common foe. The closeness and severity of the contest is attested by the long list of casualties and the mortal character of the wounds received. Of 55 officers and men in Company A, 31 were killed and wounded. But 6 of the 31 men even so far recovered as to return to the company. Of the regiment 45 fell dead upon the field, 39 were never removed from the field hospital, except as they were transferred to their graves, 28 were crippled for life. Thus 112 were dropped from the rolls by reason of this one engagement. Besides these there were 40 severely wounded, 20 more slightly, and 12 captured, making in the aggregate 193. The appended list contains the entire loss to each company. The whole number of men and officers engaged was 417, as ascertained just before the engagement began. All the Companies were engaged except Company B, which had been previously detailed as provost guard at corps headquarters.

An incident connected with the wounding of Major Ed Wright is worthy of mention. As previously mentioned, immediately after the capture of the battery, the Major was severely wounded across the thighs, rendering it necessary for him to quit the field. While the regiment was yet advancing, one of the gunners who had been "playing possum," a mode frequently employed to escape capture, discovering how short the line was, rose up in its rear and attempted to escape capture by passing around the left flank. The Major, being too severely wounded to get off the field without assistance, although able to stand, was still at the place where he had received his wounds and observed the rebel coming. Although unarmed himself, he called out to the man in gray to halt and surrender. The peremptory manner in which this was done led the startled rebel to suppose that the summons was not without the means to enforce a halt should he refuse. Concluding therefore that "prudence was the better part of valor," he surrendered. Having thus brought him to and finding him without arms, the Major passed his arm around his neck, and lean-

ing upon him for support, was enabled to reach the field hospital and turn over his quondam captive to the guards stationed there.

The evening following the first hard battle is a well remembered era in the history of every military organization. In the heat of battle, victory is the ruling passion and thoroughly absorbs all the thoughts. All men more or less dread the fiery ordeal before the storm comes on, but in its midst the most timid will struggle manfully for victory. He who has formed a resolution that he will not fight before the contest opens must not follow his comrades to the breach if he would not break it. The horrors presented on the field scarcely receive a passing notice at the time of their occurrence. The whole attention is engaged in the one object of defeating the foe. But when the contest is once decided, in the first moment of reflection the memory passes quietly back over the scenes of the day, and the pictures of blood, of wounds, and the dead, and the sounds of battle, the war of musketry and artillery, the whistling of balls, the shouts of victory, the groans of the wounded and the dying—all come thronging upon the mind, kindling emotions never felt before. Imagination leads the troubled soul homeward for relief. Visions of happiness there float in upon this present sea of blood. How anxiously friends will scan the list of casualties. It is with a sigh of relief that the soldier feels able to lift off the burden of their anxiety, a thrill of joy that he can tell of victory now, and a saddened heart, more sad than others may suppose, that he recounts the names of the brave who have fallen by his side. Assembled about the log fires, the scenes of the day are repeated as each saw them—where a comrade fell and where wounded; where the enemy retired, and where he stubbornly resisted, and in fine all the incidents of the tumultuous fray are there repeated with the interest of their first production. The wounded are being speedily collected in the field hospital immediately in the rear of the battle-ground by the ambulance corps. There might be seen busy surgeons and attendants dressing wounds, amputating limbs, extracting balls, feeding

and caring, as circumstances best afforded, for the unfortunate in battle. The chaplains, too, were busy, for one after another the mortally wounded are passing to eternity. It is a quiet, busy, bloody scene. Scarcely a moan is heard from the hundreds of suffering, dying men, strewn around. In low, sad accents the message to friends at home is whispered to the chaplain, and the dying prayer reaches across the stream of time and murmurs the arrival of another heroic soul to the spirit world. The dead are being buried by the pioneer corps. The graves of forty-five of the 24th are upon the crest of the hill on either side of the road, near the spot where they fell. Let those who would doubt the severity of the conflict visit the spot where they sleep. If the ax does not invade their cemetery, the oaks many centuries hence will stand as living monuments of the heroes who fell on the 16th day of May, 1863. The memorial of their valorous deeds is inscribed upon a thousand trunks by the death-dealing missiles of Mars, less graceful, indeed, but more thrilling and truthful than the happiest efforts of the chisel of Canova.

According to the official report of General Grant, the burden of the battle had fallen upon General Hovey's division. Its loss exceeded half the entire loss of all the troops engaged. In consequence of this, the division was allowed a few days for rest, while the remainder of the army followed rapidly in the track of the retreating foe. The division left Baker's Creek upon the afternoon of the 17th, and went into camp near Edwards Station. Here our troops had captured a train loaded with ammunition and commissary stores. The enemy had set fire to it and succeeded in partially destroying it, but there remained a quantity of sugar, molasses, meal and bacon, uninjured, which proved very acceptable to our hungry boys. The village of but five or six buildings had been turned into a hospital for the rebel wounded. All the buildings were crowded and the commons were strewn over with cotton upon which they had been placed. Many of them had been removed to Vicksburg by the cars, which doubtless accounted for our capture of the loaded train of supplies. The prisoners, 2,000,

were brought up the next morning, and having received a share of our captured meal and bacon, were marched on towards Vicksburg. The division again moved out at 4 P. M. on the 19th, and the regiment encamped on the west bank of Black River near the charred skeleton of what had been the magnificent railroad bridge. The river here is a deep, narrow, muddy stream. There were three piers, one upon either side and one in the center of the stream. The center pier could not have been less than forty feet, and may have reached fifty feet in height. There is more than a mile of trestle work leading up to the bridge from the east side, while the railroad passes out upon level ground on the west side. Beyond the trestle work the enemy had constructed a low, irregular line of earth-works, with a narrow, deep bayou in front facing an open level strip of land. From these works the gallant charge of the 22d and 23d Iowa regiments had routed the demoralized foe. The charge was made on the left of the works and near the railroad, and must have been very sudden and resolute to have succeeded so admirably. That they might be enabled to fire more rapidly, the enemy had prepared their cartridges and laid them before them on the works, where many of them still remained unused. Another line of works had been constructed upon the brow of the abrupt bluff rising on the west side of the stream. From these works a flank movement of the 15th Corps under General W. T. Sherman had driven the enemy in hot haste on the morning of the 17th. Immediately below the bridge were the wrecks of three steamers burned by the enemy to prevent capture. We could now hear the booming of cannon in the direction of Vicksburg. The first brigade moved on directly from Edwards Station to Vicksburg. The regiment was ordered on the morning of the 20th to proceed about three miles up the river to guard a bridge which had been thrown over it for the purpose of crossing another flanking column. About 4 P. M. orders were received to destroy the bridge, and return where orders awaited us to go forward towards Vicksburg. The column, setting out about dark, dragged slowly through the darkness for seven miles, where a halt ensued until

morning, when it was again ordered back to the bridge. Somebody had been ordered back to guard the crossing at Black River, and somebody had countermanded the order. The loss of a night's rest and a march of eighteen miles was the sum of our casualties. There was a little grumbling, but no matter. "It all goes in three years." Having settled down to our old camp, foraging parties were sent out to secure such articles of subsistence as the country afforded. Meal, beef, bacon, poultry and sugar were forthcoming; these, with blackberries for dessert, and we lived. The muddy waters of Black River were made more muddy by hundreds of hands mingling with them the accumulated dirt of a month's campaign from their bodies and clothing. It was a noisy, busy, tumultuous scene, and *many lives were doubtless sacrificed* in the operation.

The news of Sherman's success at Haines Bluff on the 18th, reached us on the morning of the 20th. We did not anticipate the immediate capture of Vicksburg, and hardly dared hope for an immediate opening of our long severed communications, but the news, accompanied by a mail, we were by no means disposed to doubt. From that hour all felt that the campaign was destined to be successful. Vicksburg, if not already fallen, must soon fall. Our wagons were immediately started to the new base for supplies. If there had been any doubting circumstances before, there were none now. Meantime the cannon continued to roll back their thunders from the besieged city, announcing the steady progress of the fight. The terrible assault of the 22d was heralded to our ears by a louder and more continuous roar of artillery. When it died away we thought the victory won, but the same heralds announced a continuance of the fight on the following morning. On the 24th inst. we again set out for Vicksburg. Arriving about sundown, the regiment went into camp about a mile below the Vicksburg & Jackson railroad, which at that time was the extreme left of the line.

It was some ten or twelve miles from here to Chickasaw Bayou, our base of supplies. The camp was, as were all the others, in a deep ravine. The batteries on the hill above us

were firing at the time, and many were very anxious to look over at our friends in gray. Going heedlessly up over its brow, they were first discovered by their friends, who sent them a few leaden signals of welcome, which caused them to return with somewhat wiser notions of the uncertainty of life. The lesson of caution, however, was not valueless, for, being ordered to move to the ravine in front on the following day, they took good care, as the circumstances required, to elude the vigilant eyes of the foe. The batteries protected by earthworks and trenches at the base of the hill occupied by the rebel forts were already in progress. The crests of the hills frowning with forts and artillery occupied by the opposing forces were but little more than half a mile from one another, not so far but that the gunners were obliged to keep well concealed to elude the bullets of the sharpshooters, who were concealed in gorges a short distance in advance of the works. The rebel artillery seldom replied. When one did have the audacity to fire a shot, not less than twenty guns would be turned upon their fort, raking it from every quarter except its immediate rear. The work in the trenches was performed principally at night. At dark pickets were thrown out by both sides, and all musketry firing suspended until daylight returned. The pickets were within speaking distance of one another, and at first were inclined to be social and communicative, but the rebels soon discontinued this. The trenches were used during the day for rifle pits. They were advanced at acute angles with the rebel line of works, the dirt being thrown upon the side next to the enemy. They were from two to four feet deep, according to the nature of the ground. In exposed places they were deep, and in small ravines and partially covered places were shallower. Bales of cotton and bundles of cane were used in advancing them to cover the working parties. Once or twice only during the siege did they fire upon the parties. At such time they were compelled to first withdraw their pickets, and thus give the alarm to those at work. These uniting with the pickets at such times were prepared to return the compliment. The enemy being compelled to appear upon

the parapets of the forts, were first permitted to fire into the harmless cotton bales, while they were greeted with a shower of balls from the trenches at the same instant. After a few lessons of this kind, they resorted to no more dangerous means of preventing our near approach to their works than by threats and remonstrances. Thus the work went forward steadily until each principal work of the enemy's fortifications was environed with a net-work of safe approaches from almost every direction in their front. There are miles of trenches there that cost many weary nights' labor. For more than a week previous to the surrender conversation could be carried on without any very great effort between those in the trenches and those in the forts. Thus, in the very heat of contest, when each was awaiting a favorable opportunity of shooting the other, taunts were bandied back and forth between foes. "Hello, Yank, have you got any hard tack to spare?" "Yes, look out!" and over would go a hard tack into the rebel fort. "Hello, reb, how do you like Champion Hill?" Back would come the response: "How do you like the 22d of May?" "How are you, mule steak?" The enemy were very anxious to obtain news from the outer world, and generally came on picket prepared to exchange Vicksburg papers for Northern papers. The traffic in tobacco and hard bread was carried on briskly while it was permitted, but this was stopped in consequence of other less harmless articles being conveyed within the enemy's lines by persons less loyal than money-loving.

It had been ascertained that the enemy lacked a sufficient supply of caps, and in one or two instances had received them from our soldiers, or those professing to be soldiers, at the rate of $40 per canteen full. Notwithstanding the impossibility of exposing the smallest portion of the body without experiencing that unpleasant sensation produced by the whizzing of a minie ball in close proximity to the exposed part, there were but few casualties resulting from this during the entire siege. There were more wounds received from pieces of shells torn

off by our rifled guns and their premature explosions, than from any other source.

As the infantry were far in advance of the artillery, the howling of these monster shells overhead was at times terrific. At night the scene was especially grand. The mortars, which were on the opposite side of the city, would then join their hoarse roar to the conflict. These monster shells from the east would join them in their work of destruction in the city. First was seen a flash like a distant flash of lightning, lighting up the whole western horizon; then the bright light of the burning fuse ascending at an angle of 45°. Having reached an altitude of perhaps a mile, it would begin its descent, which was announced by the deep roar of the mortar, and followed up by the hoarse howl of the shell through the air. When within a hundred feet of the ground, the shell would usually burst with a bright flash, scattering its two hundred pounds of fragments in every direction and making a noise equal to the discharge of a six-pound gun. This display of fireworks, although beautiful to our eyes, could not have been very entertaining to the besieged. Our camp was well protected from the ingress of balls except in one direction. There was a battery stationed on a hill above the camp and when firing at the gunners the rebel bullets dropped in our camp. There were three wounded, one mortally, when it was found necessary to change camp. A very slight change in its location was necessary to render the camp a safe one.

On the 8th of June Col. Byam, who had done but little duty during the entire campaign, having received a leave of absence, again left the regiment. Had it been his resignation all would have been satisfied. As it was, there was great dissatisfaction among the officers and men. During the ten months of service he had not been with the regiment much above two months. This fact, connected with the circumstances of an indisposition overtaking him at the outset of the battle of May 1, and incapacitating him for further duty during the day, had operated disastrously to his reputation in the regiment. This had occasioned the worst of the conflicting accounts of his conduct

at Champion Hill to be accepted as true by a great many. His own account of his conduct there is certainly somewhat extraordinary. He says he led his men to the battery swinging his hat, and called out to the men to come on, and that while doing this his hat was blown to atoms in his hand, and that he offered a reward of five dollars for a piece as large as his hand. Now this is his own account. I have not been able to find any one who saw him in the advance of the line at any time during the day, much less at that moment. Neither was any one able to discover the coveted piece of shattered felt. What Col. Byam might have been had not his health failed him we cannot determine, but certain it is that Vicksburg afterwards fell without his being present. If born to command, he, as a sick man, is certainly entitled to the honor of having his name enrolled among the illustrious successors of Esau.

Remnants of our baggage, which had been stored upon barges at Millikin's Bend, began to come up early in June. Nearly all that was valuable had been stolen, and the greater part of the camp equipage lost. But the weather was warm, and all that was required for comfort was a shelter from the sun and rain. The water in ravines was easily obtained by digging and was tolerably good. Still, the severe duty of one day and night in the trenches, together with the duties out every three days, caused considerable sickness among the men, although not of a very fatal character. Occasional rumors of a heavy force under Johnston approaching our rear were circulated, but the worst he could do would be to assist the beleaguered garrison to escape capture, and but few entertained any uneasiness on that score. All became accustomed to their daily routine of danger and duty, and labored cheerfully and fearlessly with a view to its early, glorious consummation. Scaling ladders were being prepared and placed in the advance pits by the first of July, and it became rumored about that a charge would be made on the enemy's works. The prospect of cutting a route through wire fences and a line of sharpened stakes, leaping ditches and then mounting the works by means of a ladder, in the face of a vigorous resistance, was not very

pleasant, surely. Nor is it likely that such was the intention of Gen. Grant, unless hardly pressed in the rear by a superior force. Every preparation, however, which could be employed to secure success was made. Happily, however, hunger was accomplishing more than skill and gallantry could effect.

Their long expected relief by the forces under Johnston had failed them, and the lean finger of famine pointed to capitulation or death by starvation. It was not difficult to determine the nature and cause of the flag of truce on the 3d inst. Yet we did not anticipate the extraordinary pleasure of witnessing the transfer of our glorious banners from our own to the rebel works on the coming morning of our national birthday, as well as the imposing surrender of 30,000 men, together with the immense munitions of war collected there to resist our approach. Such, however, was the case. Let those who can, if any such there be, fittingly represent in words the spectacle of joy presented among the bronzed heroes of that memorable campaign. Three months had elapsed since the inauguration of this last successful campaign for the capture of that rebel stronghold, the key to the Mississippi river, and the bolt which held firmly together the states east and west of its mighty flood. The long, weary days of danger, toil and exposure, the bloody conflicts of Grand Gulf, Port Gibson, Raymond, Jackson, Champion Hill, Black River Bridge, Millikin's Bend, and the fearful charge of May 22, had not been in vain. What wonder that the heroes of these battles and marches greeted the white emblems of submission with mighty cheers, as one after another they took the places of the rebel banners upon the principal works of their line. What wonder that tears of joy should start into eyes unused to weeping, as the loved old banner of freedom supplanted these! Who, of all the mighty host that witnessed it, will ever forget it? The soldiers of the two armies forgot past animosities and mingled freely together wherever permitted. Our boys cheerfully shared their rations with their half-famished foes. Many a high-born Southerner will remember the zest with which he partook of his dinner on

that Fourth of July, although it consisted of nothing more than hard tack, pork and coffee.

During the latter part of the siege Johnston had been hovering about our rear, threatening an attack for the relief of the beleaguered garrison. His headquarters were at Jackson, about fifty miles eastward, where it was said he had collected a force of 30,000 men. Accordingly in the midst of the rejoicings on the 4th came the order to be prepared to march against him at 5 o'clock in the morning. The force under command of General Sherman consisted of the 9th, 13th and 15th corps. Our corps, the 13th, was now under command of General E. O. C. Ord, Gen. John A. McClernand having been removed for misconduct during the progress of the siege. The immediate cause of his removal, it was said, was the issuance of a congratulatory order to his troops of the 13th corps, without having submitted it for approval to General Grant, in which he arrogated to himself and command more of the glory of the preceding successes than rightfully belonged to him and them. He was undoubtedly ambitious, and perhaps jealous of the successful advancement of his superiors in command. But he was well-esteemed by his troops, and his removal was the occasion of some dissatisfaction among both officers and men. Gen. Ord, however, was accounted an able officer and the dissatisfaction soon died away. The column moved out in the morning and proceeded by easy marches toward Jackson, where Johnston had collected his forces, and having repaired and strengthened the defenses, promised a second siege. The lines were closed in about the defenses on the morning of the 12th. The troops, having laid on their arms the night before, were ordered to advance in the morning as near to the enemy's works as possible, without incurring any great danger by reason of their proximity. Gen. Hovey's division was posted second from the right on the line, the 24th being formed across the Jackson & Raymond road.

The line advanced in good order, driving in the enemy's pickets and halted within long rifle range of their works. By reason of some terrible blunder the 4th division on our right,

under command of Gen. Lauman, immediately charged the works. There was a well-constructed abattis in front of the earthworks for several hundred yards. The attempt was madness. No line of infantry could have passed through it if unopposed, much less could they do it in the face of a terrible fire from the artillery and infantry in the forts. About 2,000 fell without having been able to injure the enemy, who were well protected, at least. This tragic scene on the right having passed over, firing along the lines was confined to an occasional duel between batteries and skirmishers. In consequence of the musket balls and occasional discharges of grape and canister reaching camp, it was deemed necessary to construct earthworks for protection. These were completed on the 13th, but not until two in the regiment had been wounded, one mortally.

Preparations were immediately begun for crossing the 9th corps over Pearl river, and thus cut off the enemy's retreat, but Johnston discovering this, suddenly evacuated on the 17th inst. On the morning of the 18th, our pickets seeing no enemy went over into the city. By 6 o'clock they had returned, loaded with tobacco. Gen. Hovey soon afterward riding up the road over which our regiment was posted, and observing things somewhat lax, as he supposed, began in his impetuous manner the delivery of sundry orders and rebukes.

A broad grin was visible on the countenances of all gathered around him. Orders and rebukes only came faster and thicker, until one of our officers interrupting him informed him that our skirmishers and sharpshooters had just returned from the city and had found no enemy there. "Orderly! Orderly! go and inform Gen. Ord that my skirmishers now occupy the enemy's rifle pits. Be quick." Then there was a rattling of sabres flashing in the bright rays of the morning sunlight, and the General and his staff rapidly disappeared down the road. The information had doubtless given them all an excellent relish for breakfast.

Concluded in next number.